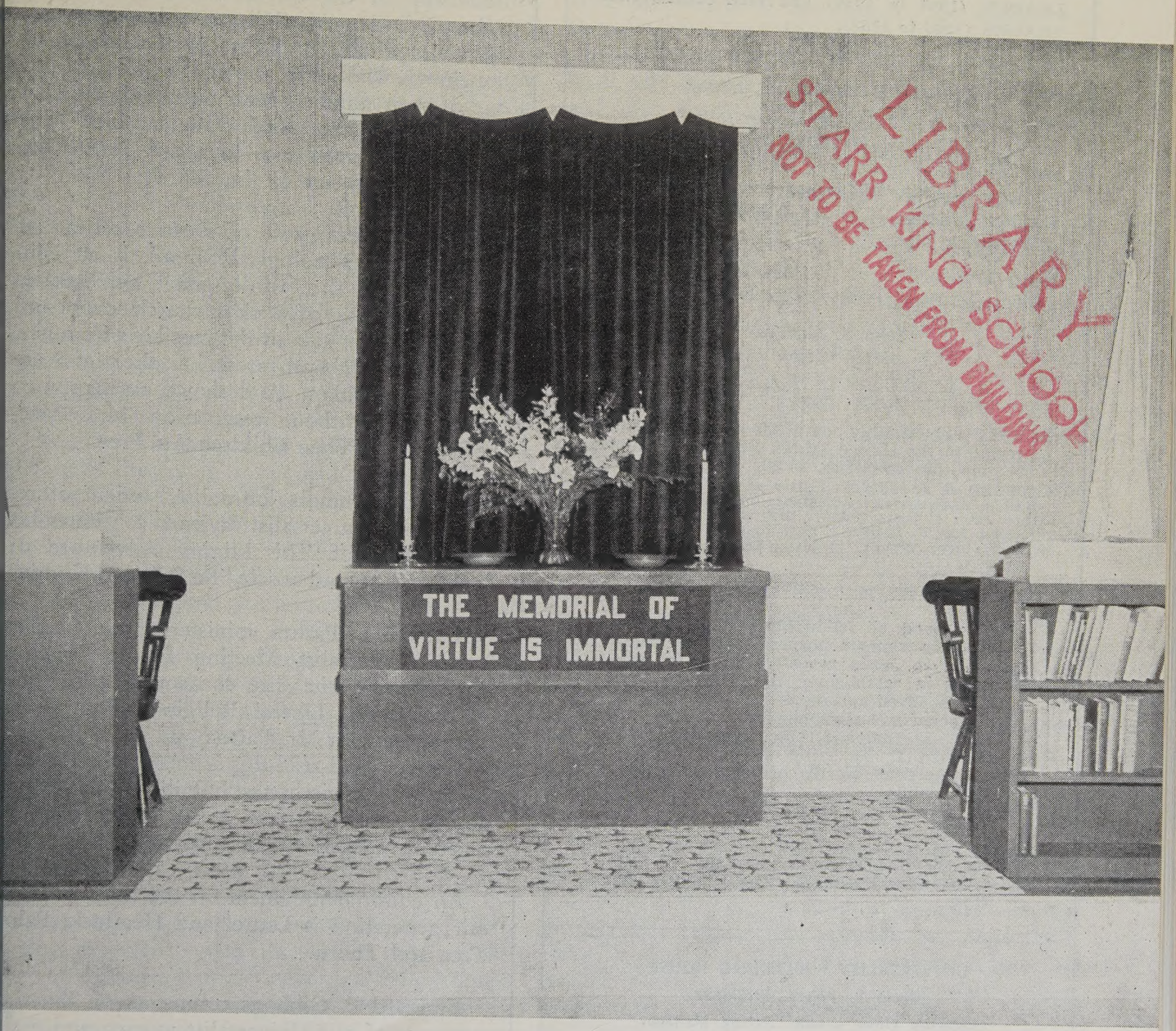
HE UNIVERSALIST *Leader*

JOURNAL OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY FOUNDED BY HOSEA BALLOU IN 1819



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Continuing the CHRISTIAN LEADER and its predecessors (1819 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST and its predecessors (1827 to 1897), the GOSPEL BANNER (1835 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST LEADER (1897 to 1926), and THE CHRISTIAN LEADER (1926 to 1953).

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The bond of fellowship in this church shall be a common purpose to do the will of God as Jesus revealed it and to co-operate in establishing the Kingdom for which he lived and died.
To that end we avow our faith in
God as Eternal and All-conquering Love,
The spiritual leadership of Jesus,
The supreme worth of every human personality,
The authority of truth known or to be known,
And in the power of men of good will and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

April, 1954 — No. 4

The Cover pictures the **Decker Memorial Chancel** in the rebuilt vestry of the Elm Street Universalist Church, Auburn, Maine. This project was planned and carried out under the leadership of the former minister, the Rev. Albert C. Niles. Mr. Niles says, however, that the major credit should go to the laymen of the church who under the active leadership of one of their number, Morris Ruttenburg, contributed the labor and craftsmanship. The Chancel is a memorial to Lloyd S. Decker, long-time treasurer of the church.

Ruth MacLean, wife of Dean MacLean of St. Lawrence Theological School, is an educator who has successfully tested her theories not only by years of work in church school and community, but also in the crucible of modern parenthood. In both areas her theories were not found lacking. And so we are happy to recommend without reservation Mrs. MacLean's essay, **When Children Are Free.**

Roland Gammon, journalist, student of religion, and Universalist layman, continues his presentation of The Mighty Adventure of Prayer in a second article **"Be Still and Know."**

Kenneth L. Patton, minister of the Charles Street Universalist Meeting House, Boston, warns against the dire consequences of **The Thickening of Liberal Religion.** Both those who agree with Mr. Patton and those who do not agree could read this article profitably as a Lenten exercise in honest humility. Though we do not agree with the entire indictment, on several counts we are all guilty.

An editorial judgment on the false gods of our generation is **Laurel and Hemlock, Palm Tree and Thorn.**

Brainard F. Gibbons comments on the significance of our Universalist women and their well-organized work for Universalism in his **Conversations with Universalists.**

When Children are Free

We must forego the temptation of our age to be fast and efficient. Children must grow into their religion. As a teacher recently said to his students, "They must live with an idea before they can grasp it."

Ruth MacLean

I HAVE been for some time preoccupied with the practical implications of freedom in Religious Ed- cation. Some fear the release of children almost s much as they fear the release of the energy of the tom. It is high time that we understand the prob- em in terms of procedures. What does freedom ean in the achievement of decorum? In the teach- ig of our basic values? What procedures does it nply in the communication of subject matter? Vhat does it mean to one who undertakes to teach niversalism? It is this last question which con- erns me in this statement.

The experience which children enjoy when seek- g truth in freedom, and the dignity accorded them persons of worth are very important factors in the rocess of giving competent understanding of and determining their loyalty to the Universalist faith.

A minister who was a bit worried about the in- uction of the young in his fold said to the super- tendent of his Church School, "And when do you art teaching Universalism?"

Her answer was prompt, "We start teaching Uni- rsalism when the child enters nursery school."

We know now that we cannot teach Universal- n by means of golden texts, catechisms or in y other capsule form. Also, we must forego the nptation of our age to be fast and efficient. *Chil- en must grow into their religion.* As a teacher re- ntly said about his students, "They must live with idea before they can grasp it." It takes a long riod of exposure to the values we cherish, and ich encouragement to serious thought and free pression, as well as a certain degree of maturity fore children can begin to put into words their igious philosophy. The point is, they must ex- ess it in their own terms, if at all. In short, with- long experience with the values that are the ing Universalism they can never put their religion o words that are meaningful to them, or get any derstanding of what is meant by the accepted ements of the church.

A twelve-year-old girl from our church school s challenged by her more orthodox friend to state the beliefs of her church. She replied with proud conviction, "My church believes in friendship." We, grown-ups, would, in all probability, have said something about "all-conquering love" and "the worth of persons." These phrases sound more in keeping with religion, but they may not be more meaningful even to us, than the word "friendship" is to her. For, I am sure she was referring to people all over the world, especially those in need of an extended hand—the people we talked about at our rather thrilling United Nations Birthday Party. In the back of her mind were also the children at the Jordan Neighborhood House for the benefit of whom we are planning a show and once gave a circus which was no end of fun. I know she meant the people of Japan whom we have come to love through our two Japanese friends and teachers. I am certain that she included her own classmates. I recently overheard a conversation in which she took part. It went as follows:

"The class period would have been fine if it hadn't been for Dan," said Ann, impatiently.

"But Dan is improving," her brother defended.

"That's right," chimed in Shirley, "Dan is really quite interested in learning about things. He has a good mind."

"Well, I guess you're right," Ann conceded. "He is doing better. When Bobbie isn't there, he gets along pretty well. He and Bobbie just don't mix."

The conversation ended with an observation by Ann's brother, "Dan is our problem. Sometimes we just don't know what to do about it."

We could multiply the accounts of experiences which have put meaning into such terms as neighbor, friendship and love. In another class Jim was the disturbing member. One day he got angry and kicked a panel out of the door. Almost before the teacher could collect her wits to cope with such a drastic turn of affairs, a member of the class spoke up, "We'll all pay for the mending of the door. We are all to blame because we started things by teasing Jim." The group agreed and arrangements were made to mend and pay the damages. A fruitful dis-

cussion on class decorum followed. From then on Jim's relationship with the rest of the class was much improved. After several years of being on the defensive, he now began to feel accepted.

I believe that the spirit of our school is such that opposition would be registered, quite unanimously, against the permanent removal of any child from a class no matter how disrupting his behavior. A ten-year-old boy was sent home from a church school up the street because of conduct which had repeatedly ruined the class sessions. He elected to come to our school. The teacher was not happy about it. A few years ago he had been taken to a psychiatric clinic where it is said he was pronounced untestable. He threw the blocks from the puzzle he was supposed to put together at those in charge of the clinic, he bit the lead off the pencils and chewed the colored beads whereupon streaks of red, green and blue ran down his chin, giving him an appearance that fitted his character, so the people at the clinic thought. He was older now by several years and not nearly so anti-social, and yet at times he was, as the saying goes, completely "haywire." The attitude of the children was "Give him another chance. He needs it." Some weeks later I observed the group at work. The new member was absorbed in the art work he was creating. No one was bothering him, and he did not seek attention. When it came time to terminate the session, the teacher spoke his name and was about to ask him to help her put things away, but before she could make her request he stiffened and said, "I know what you want! You want me to get the heck out of here." Time with people who do not consider him a nuisance will penetrate his protective armor enough to make our spoken values more meaningful.

Before a child can formulate a religious concept he must experience or accept it in the fellowship of his old and young associates. For example, we respect persons and we enjoy respect for ourselves before we can experience a belief in "respect for personality."

The problem, however, is more complicated than this. There are many parents who will quite agree that theological concepts are difficult, and had best not be pushed onto children, especially the very young. "Nevertheless," they say, "what are we going to do about the ideas they get from their friends, and even from the public school?" "Our schools are not as free of religious instruction as they claim to be," some parents say. A first grader reported the story of Easter as told by his teacher, including an account of The Ascension. A thir grade girl was confused over the version of the birt of Jesus, the son of God, born to the Virgin Mar which was related in school at Christmas time. I New York State there is an official prayer used i schools. It is addressed to "Almighty God." St phen came home from kindergarten one day a excited. "Mummy, who is Almighty God?" an "Why do we say prayers in kindergarten and not i Church School?" He had been saying this praye during his year in nursery school and half wa through kindergarten and for the first time it ha made an impression on him, but apparently it wa the sound of the words that really interested hi because he paid little or no attention to his mother explanation of God but for a whole week "Almight God" figured extensively in his conversation. Aft that it was apparently forgotten.

The Primary Department of the Church whic Stephen attended met his criticism by extendin their "singing time" to include a more form "morning meeting" or "worship service." At Chris mas time they lighted a candle to celebrate Jesu birthday and by request of one of the children th sang "Happy Birthday." And then, in this natura matter-of-fact atmosphere was interjected a startlin idea. "Jesus is God walking on earth," announce one little girl. There was a chorus of agreemen No one disagreed so the teacher let it pass.

What can we do about such situations? Shou the teacher have made clear Universalist thinkin on this subject at this particular time? Does t responsibility for teaching theological ideas re with the church school or the home or both? The questions could be discussed at length, but there a a few observations which can be made briefly. T time when a child is really interested in pursuing subject is when it presents a problem or a challen to him. Since this happens at different times to di ferent children, *the greater responsibility rests wi the home.* The church can, and should, provide o portunity for both parents and teachers to clari their own ideas in regard to religion and theolog There is fear that children will pose questions advance heretical ideas that adults are not prepar to deal with. It is not uncommon to hear a pare say "I do not know how to tell my child about Go I do not know, myself, what I think."

It is a comfort to remember that we do not ha to begin all at once, and we do not have to be hast Both the church school and the home can avoid d ficulties if they start early to establish definite tim

or serious and thoughtful discussion with the children.

Another worry which seems to dog parents in the ee church is what they call a negative approach to eir religion. Their children, they say, are unable tell their Catholic friends what they *do* believe. hey can only respond with, "We do not believe the virgin birth" or "We do not believe that the orld was made in six days" or "It is not true that e Bible was written by God." This may not be ery serious. The same charge has been made of dults. The more important fact is that *children espond positively to a religion which allows them accept history and science without conflict.* A group f Junior Highers were studying about the fall of ericho. To them the most important information as an account of the findings of archeologists. hey were amazed and relieved to find that they did ot have to accept as true the tale of marching, umpets and falling walls. They were free to evaluate the story in the light of modern knowledge.

If a church school establishes a pattern of serious roup discussion, in which freedom is respected, ost children will, *given time to mature,* formulate me very positive attitudes and concepts relative to ligion. A fifth grade class was studying about oses. "God's talking to folks is all baloney," irst forth one of the boys. "That's right," said other. "They just talked to themselves and imaged God talked back." "No, you're wrong," broke a girl, her voice trembling with emotion. "I think ey did talk to God and He answered them back. ople still talk to God and they get answers."

A war of words broke loose and the teacher had step in as referee. The discussion which followed abled these children to put into words some of e questions and vague thoughts they had had, and lped them to clarify their thinking about prayer. *the end they found a common ground for agreent.*

Some fourth graders thought they could express ir ideas about worship better by making pictures places where people worship than they could press them in words. They made pictures of rches, of a child kneeling by her bed, of a beaul sunset with a figure, arms raised, looking tord it, and one boy made a school. When asked tell why he drew a school, he said, "We worship school when we say the prayer and when we ute the flag." So these pictures opened up a real portunity for discussion which brought their lings about worship into acceptable words.

Thirteen fifth and sixth graders all said that they believed in prayer. "Not asking God for a bicycle," one said, "but praying to be better," and then she added, "if you work at it, too." They did not think that one prayed only in church or at bedtime. "Sometimes you pray when you don't even say words, you just think," one volunteered.

This same group had some rather definite ideas about God, Heaven, and life after death. Discussions arose out of their study of "Beginnings of Life and Death." "God is everywhere," "God is the good in the world," "God is our conscience," "God is the law of nature; He wants things to be good, if they aren't He feels badly," were the ways they described their thinking. Although one girl thought of God as "sort of a person," they were all scornful over the suggestion that He might be thought of as an old man with long white whiskers.

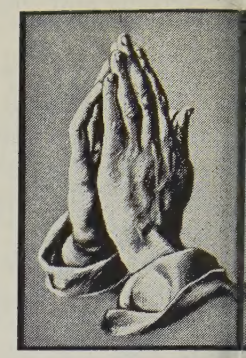
One girl who said that Heaven was up in the sky revised her thinking after hearing what the rest had to say. "Heaven is all around us, it isn't just in one place," they declared. "You make Heaven, or you don't," one said. "Heaven isn't a place, it's the way you feel inside," still another thought.

In regard to the soul or what we call our spiritual being they were quite uncertain. The concept seemed beyond them. One boy in an attempt to describe himself beyond his obvious physical characteristics said, "My old heart just goes thump, thump, thump—that's me."

The question of life after death did not concern them at this time. "We only live in memory," one said. Another advanced the theory that "We are born again in another person." She said it with a smile and added, "Anyway, I think it is fun to think that." The conversation ended with the blunt remark of a realist, "When we die, we just rot. That's all." The question came up again, as these questions do. This was in connection with Negro spirituals. We were talking about the words. It was possible at this point to explain why the question of life after death is so important to some people.

And these are not the child's last words. In fact *they represent but the first stumbling expressions of his wonderings about the mysteries which have confounded men through the ages.* A free school presents problems, not more, but different from those of the text-centered curriculum. For Universalists, it seems to me, the free school is the only way. The values for which we stand and the faith which we hold can only find nurture in an environment where these values and this faith are operative.

The Mighty Adventure of Prayer



II. "Be Still and Know"

Roland Gammon

THE science of parapsychology, the "venture beyond psychology" which encompasses the field of extra-sensory perceptions, demonstrates its constructive influence on religion by freeing men from a physicalistic view of life and reinterpreting Jesus' insight, "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." Thus, traditional religion expands its domain and rewins the allegiance of skeptical millions by utilizing scientific methods of discovery. As Professor Rhine summarizes current trends in his book, *The Reach of the Mind,* "Research in parapsychology now touches all the great issues of religion. If the mind of man is non-physical, it is possible to formulate a picture of a non-physical world made up of all such minds existing in some sort of relation to each other. This leads to speculative views of a kind of psychical oversoul, reservoir, or continuum, or universe, having its own set of laws and properties. One can conceive of this great total pattern as having a transcendent uniqueness over and above the nature of its parts that some might call its divinity." Thus, we conclude that man is hopelessly and hopefully metaphysical and, therefore, prays.

But is that limitless power available to the average American, you ask, not just to scientists and saints? Can each of us shift our seeking Godward in such a way as to supplement our finite resources with infinite resource, leaven our personal consciousness with divine consciousness, identify our true being not with the ego but with the soul? In short, does prayer really work?

The answer for every American and every Universalist, based on the oldest intuitions of the mystics, the newest discoveries of the scientists and the everyday experience of millions, must be a ringing *Yes.* Prayer works, if you have faith *and* the slightest understanding of its nature. Prayer works, if you honestly, earnestly, silently surrender yourself to God and humbly listen for His word. Prayer works, if you don't make it a cosmic "gimme-game," but rather an opportunity to perfect yourself in constant awareness and adoration of the Most High.

Prayer is not sentimentality, but consecrated will power. Prayer is not weakness, but the union of human love with that "Love which moves the sun and the other stars." Prayer, as Emerson has suggested, is "a study of truth, a sally of the soul into the unfound infinite." Thus, our thirst for completeness or holiness takes many forms.

Prayer is as infinite as it is varied and it is varied because it is infinite. Where most of us believe that we are praying to God, the noblest men and women show us that prayer itself is the Divine. The new Meditation Room at the United Nations resulted from the prayers of such leaders of the Laymen's Movement as Mrs. J. C. Penny, Weyman Huckabee and Eugene Exman and sixty thousand other U.S. members who pray daily for all U.N. delegates.

With prayer as his principal source of income Harry C. Eva of New York City has spent a lifetime befriending the abandoned and unwanted boys of the metropolis. Every night with a prayer on his lips and the moon as his searchlight, this frail seventy-nine-year-old man pokes through empty lofts and alleys looking for hungry, broke and broken boys and returns them to his unique Home For Homeless Boys in the Bronx. Altogether, in fifty-five years, he has fed, sheltered and taught to pray more than fifty-one thousand forlorn waifs. Similarly, prayer motivated a fifty-two-year-old Government official Herve L'Heureux, when he started a prayers-for-peace movement three years ago. To date, five thousand eighty-one organizations have endorsed his idea that Americans pause one minute each noon to pray for peace. Missionary-minded businessman Robert G. Letourneau, who makes earth-moving equipment but who has been moving mountains with faith for years, recently sent a million dollars' worth of heavy machinery, food supplies and New Testa

ents to Liberia in what he terms his "deal with od" to teach the Gospel and modern agriculture the natives at the same time.

The English playwright, Dodie Smith, devotes a lf hour to prayer before she retires each night. She t only prays for herself, but for the welfare of iends who aren't doing too well. "It's a long list," e says, "because it keeps growing all the time; r when those in whose behalf I start praying be- n to do well, I keep their names in. I'm afraid drop them out, lest it break their luck, and so r it hasn't."

In millions of such lives today, prayer is as natu- l as sunlight, as real as gravity and as powerful atomic energy. In such vital worship, a New ork Telephone Company executive, Bob Doing, und sufficient strength last year to resign his com- rtable post, set out on the highways and byways America to launch his "Strait Gate Program" of ayer, Bible-reading and surrender to Christ and, en, watch the movement multiply from coast to ast in a chain reaction of transformed lives. In ch earnest inner seeking, such movie stars as Mala wers, Dale Evans, Coleen Townsend, Jane Rus- l, Barbara Hale and Connie Haines now meet gularly in their Hollywood homes to discuss re- ion out of their own experience, to pray for oth- and to witness as to God's spirit in their own es. In humble acknowledgment of that Power ich sustains kings and queens, as well as school ls and chimney sweeps, twenty-seven-year-old zabeth II ascended the English throne with the uest that her subjects from Capetown to Singa- re "pray for me . . . that I may faithfully serve m and you all the days of my life."

As the most intimate of human aspirations, prayer an individual matter. As an awakening of the l, prayer progresses according to each person's e and pace. Yet, there are three approaches to yer, at once separate and overlapping, which ry seeker must practice if he is to continue to w spiritually: petitionary prayer, mystical prayer, rcessory prayer.

etitionary prayer, or asking benefits for your- , begins with your discovery that you are a spirit, vell as a body. It may start as intellectual con- on that God exists, that He wishes to be known, that you as His creation should know Him bet- It may start as intuitive awareness that your liness of heart and dissatisfaction in living are ed by your neglect of God, your self-centered re to open yourself to His promptings, rely on His guidance, do His will rather than your own. It may start because, overwhelmed by disaster and depleted of egotistical resources, you have nowhere to turn but to the Eternal. It may start simply with the most arrant personal begging for name and fame, riches and rewards, power and success.

However the prayer life starts, it may well begin with Paul's exhortation: "Be still, and know that I am God." Desperate for His aid or joyful in His love, you knock at the holy gate in silence; you hush yourself and whisper His name and wait upon the Lord. Before you confess your sins, before you ask for help, even before you surrender your will to His, you raise your soul in silence before God. Then, slowly, in the silence of adoration and in the depths of your being, the soul rises and becomes one with Him.

Harry A. Bullis, chairman of the board of General Mills, learned the lifelong habit of turning to God in every emergency, when as a moody youth his mother told him one day, "Harry, you go straight out into the woods and talk over your troubles with God." He did, and gradually amid the silent trees, the gangling Bullis thought he heard God saying, "Harry, stop being ashamed. Stop worrying about your height. Lift up your head. Walk forward with honesty and courage, and you will fight your way up to a good life."

In attaining the good life and his place as America's foremost food manufacturer, Bullis has never failed to turn silently to God in making every decision, whether expanding his business, bossing an army company, or surmounting his wife's death. Today, he says, "the habit my mother taught me of tuning in to God — periods of silence and contemplation during the business day — has helped me all through life. And I learned early that my listening post could be anywhere."

Maintaining such a spiritual listening post leads inevitably to mystical prayer or a sense of the holy. "Blessed are those," said Thomas a Kempis, "who gladly spare time for God." You begin by sparing a little time for prayer in the morning and evening; you progress until you are repeating prayers in all kinds of places and circumstances; you become perfect when you obey perfectly the Biblical injunction to "pray without ceasing." Thus, finally, prayer as personal pleading evolves into prayer as described by Brother Lawrence as "the practice of the presence of God."

Jesus practiced God's presence so perfectly that, as he says forty-seven times in the Gospel of John,

He never did anything, never said anything, never went anywhere until His Father gave the command. He listened every moment of the day to His invisible companion, saying "Yes" in perfect obedience and in that perfect obedience knowing that "The Father is in me and I in Him." Now, of course, Jesus is the perfect standard, but it is possible to approach that standard.

Why can't we think of God as often as we talk or eat or drink or smoke? Why can't we offer as many thoughts and feelings to God as we spew out words and wisecracks to our companions? Why can't we fill the chinks of time between personal, business and social duties with an uprising of the mind, an opening of the spirit, a surrender of our total being to its Creator and Preserver? We can, if we resolve to do so and if we believe in the benefits to follow; we can, if we believe enough to be great and trust an all-knowing, all-loving, all-providing Providence; we can, if we remember that the Almighty longs to give all creation a sense of His presence and to keep our "mind and heart in the knowledge and love of God."

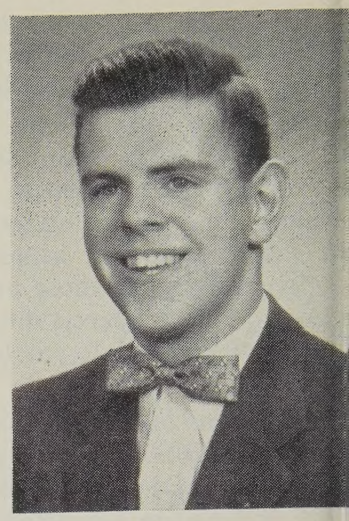
But, you must begin and painfully practice. As G. K. Chesterton once remarked, "If anything is worth doing, it is worth doing badly." And so it is with prayer, we must begin at the beginning however badly we may do it. We can begin by repeating some simple word such as God or Jesus or Love over and over again on our heartbeat; we can direct brief thanksgivings and silent invocations to the omnipresent Soul of the universe; we can more and more give every thought, every tendency, every reaction in life an upward turn to God. These repeated short prayers in the beginning, as Gerald Heard says, are "stabs like an angina stroke on the heart or like a certain stabbing sense of one's distance from God, one's longing for Him, one's terrible sense of one's own weakness."

Gradually, however, as we surrender ourselves to God and practice His presence with trust and thanksgiving, there comes the conviction that He has made this world for us and has made us to come to Him. Gradually, in controlling our monkey minds from constant distraction and centering our attention more and more on the Light within, we understand St. Augustine's sublime insight, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee." Gradually, in clinging to God continually and in continuing even when there seem to be no results, we sense His presence and His peace, feel that He is the soul's director and educator, know that we "live and move an have our being in Him."

The truth is that the closer we come to God, th closer we come to being free. But because of God granting us free will and because of our splintere superficial, ego-centered living, modern men kno this less and less. Conversely, when we "get awa from it all," we feel our spirits returning to whe they have always been, namely in God. Thus, Tho Heyerdahl and his five Norwegian companion crossing four thousand and five hundred miles o the trackless Pacific and riding their balsa raft Kon Tiki alone under the silent stars, came to realiz that life before the technical age was probably rich and deeper than our own. Thus, the great-soule Gandhi, who as a bustling young South Africa lawyer was an agnostic, found faith and a rhythm reflection of the divine in prayer and regular rea ings of the Indian epic, *The Bhagavad-Gita.* "I bl lieve in prayer," he said, "because I believe in Go It is the surest means of becoming conscious of H presence." Modern man, like his God-fearing a cestors, must arise and go to his Father.

(*To be Continued in May*)

SELECTED TO REPRESENT MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH



David Sargent, seventeen-year-old Eagle Scout o Peabody and president of the Liberal Religiou Youth group of the Park Street Universalist-Un tarian Church, was recently selected by a committe appointed by Governor Christian A. Herter as th Massachusetts representative "Young Outdoor Ame ican" to the nation-wide conference last month i Chicago under the sponsorship of the Isaak Walto League of America, Incorporated.

The conference studied more effective ways fo youth to achieve greater results in natural resource improvement and conservation.

The Thickening of Liberal Religion

enneth L. Patton

s unsatisfactory as our condition is, there is no better location, in organized eligion at least. No other denominations offer superior launching sites for prophetic moral re-evaluation of the human scene.

THE "liberal" churches have assumed that they could escape the fate that has befallen other ioneering movements. They have not. Religions re brought to birth by revolutionaries, developed y followers with little creative urge of their own, vho soon turn the innovations of the prophets into ne solidities of dogma, and are continued by tradi-on-loving priests and uniformity-loving people. erhaps, because of their lip-service to the free-ind principle and to the ideal of growth, the Uni-rians, Universalists, and Ethical Societies have be-eved themselves capable of indefinite regeneration.

The emergent reforms of the last century are in cession. Higher criticism has degenerated into eo-orthodoxy. Evolutionary idealism has waned nd traditionalism is in ascendancy. The social gos-el has been squelched.

Humanism has been waited out and talked to eath, and now possesses little critical or generative rce in the bulk of religion. In its own congrega-onal expression it has become formal, respectable d conservative. In recent decades no new insights ve erupted with any power. The liberal churches ve become impotent and their institutions are no nger pregnant.

The liberals seem convinced that they are the owing edge. Very briefly, perhaps, they were, t never as significantly as they assumed. In a ntury and a half they have thickened, gathered eight and density. Slowly they have sunk down o the general mass of respectable society.

The creative advances of recent decades have been ained in social agencies, in scientific and artistic lds. Much less being a prophetic leader, liberal igion has not even been a good follower and pil of these more creative institutions. This may rald a religious revolution and the birth of new oneering sects. Or it may mark the demise of the creativity of organized religion. If our movements are to redeem themselves there must be an internal revolution, the potentiality of which is not self-evident.

This thickening has advanced in four areas. In the structure and practice of local churches, changes in the form and content of worship and parish practice have been negligible. We have demonstrated an almost total lack of creative genius in this area. Of late we have been becoming more stereotyped than we had been. With our women's groups, men's groups, church bazaars, couples clubs, Sunday morning services and Sunday schools, we have varied the patter slightly, but it is the same old bag of parlor tricks.

We have also failed to create our own necessary and unique approach and content for the education of a liberal ministry. Fields of study, teaching methods, concept of the minister's role have scarcely been changed from Protestantism in general. Our ministerial schools have suffered a severe debilitation. If students in such training show any individuality and creativity, it is discouraged in the schools and quickly frustrated in the parishes they go to serve.

Of late a sterile professionalism is developing in the liberal clergy, with ministerial unions, codes of ethics, and a frigid sense of protocol and etiquette. Patterned after secular professional organizations, the intent is to fit comfortably into community and cultural patterns, inheriting the security of good middle-class conformity. Over the generations the "characters" have been weeded out, by the screening of denominational agencies, by polite and impolite pressures, by the deadly antagonism of offended congregations, and even by excommunication. Perhaps this helps to explain why the caliber of liberal preaching is good only in contrast to other denominations. We have produced no rank-

ing philosophers, essayists, or poets to give literary expression to our gospel and dynamic definition to its precepts.

The reaction of society to the failure of liberal religion to live up to the promise of its verbalized ideals is clear in its response. The three denominations have scarcely maintained the numbers of their early growth, sometimes not that, while the population has increased several times over. As they lost in numerical power, they have also dwindled in civic and national influence.

The second area of thickening lies in the denominational structures. Local churches have surrendered increasing power and functions to headquarters. Without much idea of why they are in existence, they turn for instruction to denominational officials who are supposed to know. As the churches become infirm they must appeal for subsidy and staff assistance or perish; many perish anyway. If they are under subsidy, outright coercion can be and is levied from the top, with edicts to follow the judgments of headquarters or suffer the removal of the subsidy. This is called responsible guidance; in other places it has been called boycott. With the piling up of legacies and the financial remains of dead churches, the national and regional agencies have become powerful in their own right, with the greater part of their funds coming from their own endowments.

Religious bureaucracy suffers the same blight as do other forms. Being a big operation, it seeks efficiency, becoming dominated by the philosophy and standards of business success. It maintains itself by showing financial and membership increases. This motivates conservative methods of promotion and extension. A new parish must "succeed," and radicalism may imperil its growth. Extension executives frankly prefer "safe and sane" ministers in extension churches. Thus the new churches are influenced to be outposts of compromise and conformity rather than pioneering stations. In the early days a new church was born because of an outburst of prophetic enthusiasm in a new area. Today a new parish is properly surveyed, instructed and guided into the prescribed patterns of development.

Liberal churches are gradually developing an unadmitted heirarchy. The departments of ministry and fellowship boards can screen out ministerial candidates deemed unfit, and act in advisory capacity to theological schools on the admittance of students. Studies are being made preparatory to the use of tests for screening students. But have we given denominational officials the power to decide what are the proper characteristics and abilities of our ministers? Is it not likely that men of any originality and critical mentality will be judged unfit? Only a movement that has lost its sense of adventure and experimentalism could consider such sterile procedures.

The third area of thickening lies in the general cultural aridity of liberal religion. In the last century there has been a profound revolution in the arts, in painting, sculpture, poetry, prose, the dance and architecture. This has been almost entirely a revolution in the secular arts, for the churches have been virtually divorced from the art world. If liberal religion were really profound and "liberal," it would have been in the midst of this revolution, utilizing the genius of these men, whose departures in their fields are inherently related to the growing force of thought and religious insights. But instead we have been stolid and chauvinistic. In relation to the arts liberal religion is a cultural waste. The Catholic church has served them with more appreciation.

This places the church in a most quizzical position. The persons who are intrigued and drawn out by these intuitive and aesthetic developments, which are closely related to religious experience, if not indiscernibly so, must go to the museum, the concert hall, the theatre, even to movies and television on rare occasions, for sustenance and a contemporary speaking. Consequently many persons of intellectual and artistic bent ignore liberal religion as dull and insensitive and unresponsive to what is for them the brightest growth of their times.

This was not always so, for in the heyday of Unitarianism, the flowering of New England, the Unitarian churches were very much in things cultural. But they have only seldom advanced beyond the Victorian era. The increasing inflexibility and conservatism of their advanced institutional years has unfitted them for growing culturally with the times. Universalists are, in the majority, of the largely uncultural middle class, and their religious arts are in the usual pauperized state of Protestantism in general. The few exceptions in this bleak picture only serve to underline the general scene.

No liberal religion can have a vigorous life and development apart from the arts. Unless we use our modern poets, painters, sculptors and architects as did the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, there will be no compelling beauty and dignity to the expression of our religious ideals. If we do not make use of the modern arts, let us

be assured that other religious movements will, and they will outstrip us. Or else the people will discard the church and turn to the institutions of the artistic world for their satisfaction in beauty and profound experience.

The fourth area of thickening of liberal religion lies in its inadequacy as an effective instrument of social change and melioration. In the past we have prided ourselves upon leadership in areas of reform and social justice, and not without justification. That day is past. We have become so respectable, so encumbered with stocks and bonds and real estate, so sensitive to public opinion that we hardly stir the dust. Social action has been tabbed as subversive in religion generally, and we are taking note.

The liberal churches have developed no clear conscience on war and militarism. We are prompt to fill our quota of chaplains and to adjust in every way to war-making machinery. Denominationally we give only a token support to the conscientious objector.

We have become parrots of nationalistic cold war propaganda. We have succumbed to the gospel of the divided world and the fallen condition of half of humanity. Somehow our liberalism has failed us just where it should have come to our rescue.

More and more we reflect the general political and economic reaction of our society. We are as comfortably ensconced in the prevailing materialism of our luxury-loving age as any other group, even more than some. We are not pioneers; we are respectable suburbanites. We work at the same kinds of jobs, eat the same kind of groceries, drive the same makes of cars, read the same sports pages as those of all other faiths. Since we live no differently, how can we expect our religious lives and thoughts to be greatly in variance? We diverge on mild theological matters, which are of no practical consideration in any case, but when it comes to the serious social evils of our time, we are as undisturbed as the rest. We are not yet able to hire Negroes as ministers, nor build effectively interracial churches. We have found no answer to the social class limitations to our congregations. The laboring classes spurn us.

As unsatisfactory as our condition is, there is no better location, in organized religion at least. No other denominations offer superior launching sites for a prophetic moral re-evaluation of the human scene. None offers a better ground for aesthetic and philosophical growth. Wherever you are you will have to scratch. There is no advantage in trying to start a new movement, not in this climate.

But we do not submit to the above conditions as being inevitable. If we are to advance in the truly liberal tradition, we will shake loose the structures and forms of our local churches, and become intentionally inventive and experimental in our approach.

In the second area, that of denominationalism, we will reaffirm our once vaunted congregational autonomy. We will tell headquarters that we are free bodies. When we want their help we will ask for it. We will ordain our own ministers and hire whomever we think is fit. We will set our own standards and we will be as idiosyncratic as we want to be. As long as the headquarters people are offering a straightforward service we will accept it according to our needs, but if they assume powers and authorities we will slough them off. I believe the departments of the ministry and of fellowship should be junked; they have developed into instruments foreign to the freedoms of liberal religion. Churches being aided should resist staunchly any coercion over their liberties via financial boycott. For we will keep our freedoms *within* the liberal movement only through eternal vigilance.

In the area of the arts we will reach out and join forces with the artists and scholars and philosophers. We will tear down all fences between the sacred and the secular, the religious and the aesthetic. We will make the great art of our time the supporter of our voice.

In the fourth area we will return to our prophetic role, whatever the price of public abuse may be.

If all this stirs up a fuss, then on with the fuss. There is everything to gain and little to lose. If the liberal churches go on in their present drift, they are destined for mediocrity and oblivion. The force of liberalism generated in the now defunct theological debates of one hundred and fifty years ago has spent itself, and we have not regenerated another momentum to thrust us forward. If a revolution within the ranks is unlikely, it is not impossible. We must discover the valid visions emerging in our own time, even as did our ancestors who founded our movements, and moving into those visions we may find a new vigor and youthfulness that will save us and use us.

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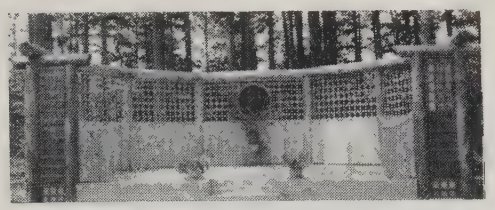

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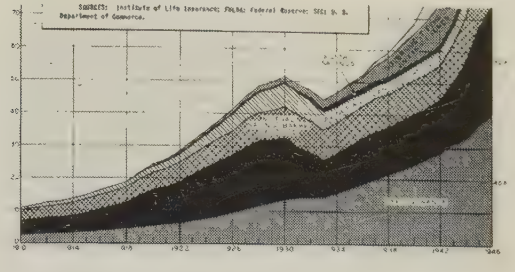

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Tomorrow Is Sunday:

Go to the Church of You

UNIVERSALISTS CONCLUDE THEIR 100th ANNIVERSARY OBSERVANCE WITH SUNDAY'S PROGRAM

Universalist Leader To Give Sermon At Installation Of Local Minister

Mrs. Laura (Smith) Hersey Heads Universalist Women

STUDENTS FOR THE UNIVERSALIST MINISTRY

WE have often called attention to the financial needs of our theological schools at St. Lawrence and Tufts. We will do so again from time to time because support of our theological schools is a continuing responsibility of Universalists.

There is another equally pressing need of the schools and that is for a constant supply of high grade students. This need can be easily met IF every Universalist minister does his job of seeking out and encouraging promising young men and women to enter the ministries of parish work and religious education. Unless the need is thus met, our schools will lack the basic human material to turn out ministers.

We suggest that every Universalist minister make it his business NOW to send in at least one name of a prospective student to the Dean or Registrar of the school from which he was graduated.

We urge every Universalist minister to make a part of the educational program of his ministry at least two instruction periods each year during which he explains the needs, the opportunities and the significance of the modern liberal ministry to the entire adult parish.

We urge our ministers also to stimulate their parishes to accept responsibility for some scholarship aid to their local student candidates for the ministry.

The need of both schools is real and urgent. Every minister can help and should help NOW. THE NEED IS NOW for classes entering next October. Send your names to Max A. Kapp at St. Lawrence or Eugene S. Ashton at Tufts.

SUCCESS TO THE THEOLOG

WE are happy to note the rebirth of *The Theolog,* a quarterly publication of the students of the Theological School of St. Lawrence University. Dean McKennon and his editorial associates, James Mott, William Smithers, Kenneth Mochel, and Ginger van Horn have brought out an attractive magazine. Volume 3, Number 1, Fall of 1953 contains a heartening picture of student life in the school, and a creditable array of articles revealing student opinion and idealism. Success to *The Theolog.*

REPORT ON OUR SUSTAINING FUND

AT the close of our fiscal year, March 31, our friends had given over four thousand dollars to the annual Leader Sustaining Fund, an increase over recent years. This four thousand dollars represented the difference between life and death for your journal of liberal religion. Even with this extra income, and substantial economies effected by the directors, however, we closed our year with a deficit.

To balance our present budget, we need ten thousand dollars annual income *in addition to* present subscription and endowment returns.

We can no longer carry on absorbing annual deficits. Therefore, *The Universalist Leader* must more than double its annual Sustaining Fund returns *during this next fiscal year,* April 1, 1954 to March 31, 1955, *or* add to its capital funds enough to produce the equivalent investment income. We must therefore continue without abatement our appeal for Sustaining Fund contributions *and,* without further delay, see about increasing our capital funds.

This outline of our condition and our need does not envisage merited increases for our *Leader* staff or desirable expansion of the paper itself. For the last four years, the staff of *The Universalist Leader* has had no increases in salary nor have the members asked for increases. In spite of near disastrous inflation, they have continued to serve the cause of Universalism at some cost to themselves and without complaint.

The directors of The Universalist Publishing House are most grateful to the hundreds of individual Universalists who have helped us in the past.

We believe The Universalist Church, Universalist people, and the larger cause of liberal religion need *The Universalist Leader.* We are therefore asking for not less but for more help in the immediate future.

—DAVID L. PEIRCE, *President,*
Universalist Publishing House

THE GOVERNMENT OF BOLIVIA is leftist by U. S. standards, and one of its program points, besides nationalization of the mines, is a far-reaching land reform plan. The United States, whose officials are strongly against much of the Bolivian planning, nevertheless gave the country a loan of nine million dollars which will provide farm credits for the many new land-holders. This is a far cry from the old diplomacy. (WP)

Laurel and Hemlock, Palm Tree and Thorn

A Sermon for the Holy Season

Once men wove a laurel wreath
For fleet winners of the games;
Gave a cup of deadly hemlock
To the wise teacher of the young.
Simple multitudes strewed palms
Before the loving friend of men;
A cross and crown of thorns
The fear crazed leaders wrought,
To wound and slowly kill
The Prophet Son of Man.

Laurel for fame, hemlock for death;
Palm and thorn to crown the crucified.

"Whereunto shall I liken the men of this generation? They are like unto children playing in the marketplace. . . . And saying, we piped unto you and you have not danced."

An orchid for the lady of Hollywood!
Easy eyeful of cute curves,
Youth's sweet dream of perennial adolescence,
Senility's stimulant to forget his impotence.
An Oscar for the handsome glamor boy
Who graces silver screen and TV tube,
Dream lover of lone maidens,
Hero of fretful wives of humdrum husbands
Whose poor paltry pay check virtue
Crushes the illusion of perpetual honeymoon.

"Ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times."

Envious accolade for wily greed;
"Yu gotta admit he's smart."
Manipulation slick and sure and swift
Made fortunes from the people's ships
No crime; only the tax pressed people lost.
For the people to profit from their property
Would be socialism or even worse.
("They sold the righteous for silver" — Hush.)
Cheers for noble patriots
Who relieved us of our surplus.

"Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing."

Hats off to contrite "Commie" converts,
Long schooled and skilled to ends
That justify dark means.
Once disciplined deceivers,
Now Democracy's defenders;
Politicians' pride and editors' delight.
Never mind the loyal citizen who long
Eschewed the Moscow menace, no import he.
But better watch him lest he stray.
Heroic acclaim for contrite "Commie" convert.

"So persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Investigate this teacher of our young;
He does not bow before the tinsel.
The influential do not impress him;
He must be subversive. Give him the works,
Persecute him with the double oath.
(Insult to integrity, mockery of patriotism.)
He will not conform to the mediocre norm.
He will not keep *our* party line,
Nor mold *our* children in *our* image.
For him, hemlock exile from the halls of ivy.

"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; But there shall be no sign given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

"Who's this queer Jo, dreamy guy?
Calls himself man of religion,
And calls *all* men his brothers;
Cries for every stinking Hottentot
To have their milk at our expense.
("Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least—")
Nuts! we know 'our blessed Lord's' religion;
Straight from the ancient Holy Creed,
'God of very God' — 'right hand of the Father'.
Throw *this* punk out. He don't belong."

"And there was a darkness over all the earth."

"Then Pilate released Barabbas unto them:
And when he had scourged Jesus,
He delivered him to be crucified."
Down the mountain to the city
Simple multitudes strewed palms.
Up the hill to Calvary
The rabble hurled stones and curses.
And he died, as dies decency in our day,
And with him died love and honor,
And hope of brotherhood to be.

"He is not here. He is Risen!"

Lift up your hearts, He lives!
Love and loyalty of simple multitudes
Rolled the stone of dumb despair
From the darkened tomb of love.
He sits in the light of humble hearths
Where bread is broken and shared
With the homeless and the needy.
In unsung loyalty of man to man
He lives, and with him live love
And honor, and hope of brotherhood to be.

—E. H. L.

Conversations With Universalists

WELCOME to my Lexington home, fellow Universalists! Draw up a comfortable chair in my study and relax for a bit of friendly, casual conversation. Outside the ground is soggy, the air damp and the sky dull — just the day to stay inside and talk. Yet, despite such somber atmosphere, it already begins to feel like spring on this last Saturday of February. Gazing out the picture window, it actually looks like spring. Cautiously, buried bulbs are poking pale slim spikes above the dark surface to survey the situation carefully. And I swear those are tiny buds on the dogwoods! By the time these words meet your eyes, this glorious promise will have burst into gorgeous reality. What an infinite blessing is this eternal round of the seasons! Doesn't it fill you with wonder, awe and gratitude?

Nature is certainly vividly alive. And we have evidence that a few more Universalists are alive also. During February there were twelve responses to these "conversations," eight by letter and four verbally, making a total of eighteen to date. Not a great number, to be sure, but encouraging! All are favorable to the tenor of these modest efforts but one, who is disinterested because they do not deal with meaty, weighty subjects and, I suspect, highly inflammable issues. Yet, many have noted and commented upon several matters of denominational importance gently included in these thoughts, and their reactions will probably be woven into subsequent installments.

There is a personal reaction to your responses that is a bit too subtle for my limited powers of expression. They strengthen my sense of being bound with innumerable others, though distant and unknown, in the common cause of Universalism. I feel an intimate friendship with those who write, even though some I have never met. And what is more important than mutual respect and friendship among people in these days of distrust and hostility — especially among Universalists!

An enterprising minister published one of these "conversations" in his Sunday calendar, evidently wanting to introduce me more widely among his parishioners. That laudable act brought me up with deep concern. If all Universalists read *The Universalist Leader,* as they should, no additional means to spread my thoughts would be necessary. Why don't all take the *Leader?* The cost is negligible and its value incalculable. Indeed, one can hardly be a literate Universalist without knowing of Universalism's developing policies, programs and concepts that appear in the *Leader.* Think not that these observations don't apply to you who read these words. Don't compare them to the Sunday morning complaints of the minister about poor attendance that fall only on the ears of those present, not those absent. Universalism needs informed Universalists, and you should be concerned to increase their number. Every subscriber to the *Leader* could and should easily persuade one or two others to subscribe every year. How subscriptions would double, treble and more, if enough Universalists were concerned — enough!

Then, one February day I came upon further evidence of another kind which demonstrated that some Universalists are alive. After a morning of outside conferences and a hasty luncheon, I returned to Headquarters to check any matters needing immediate attention before departing for more meetings. From the floor above my office came a louder hum of voices than usual, and I went up to investigate. There I found fifteen women and one man, members of the A.U.W. Clara Barton Birthplace Committee and interested guests. They were meeting all day and evening, as they do several times a year, to solve the complex problems of financing and operating their Barton and Joslin Camps for diabetic girls and boys. The one man present was director of the Joslin Camp. There were Universalist women at work on a pioneer project of inestimable value to humanity and Universalism. Did you realize that they must raise over sixty-seven thousand dollars to run those camps this year? And they'll do it, as they always have!

That meeting upon which I chanced symbolized

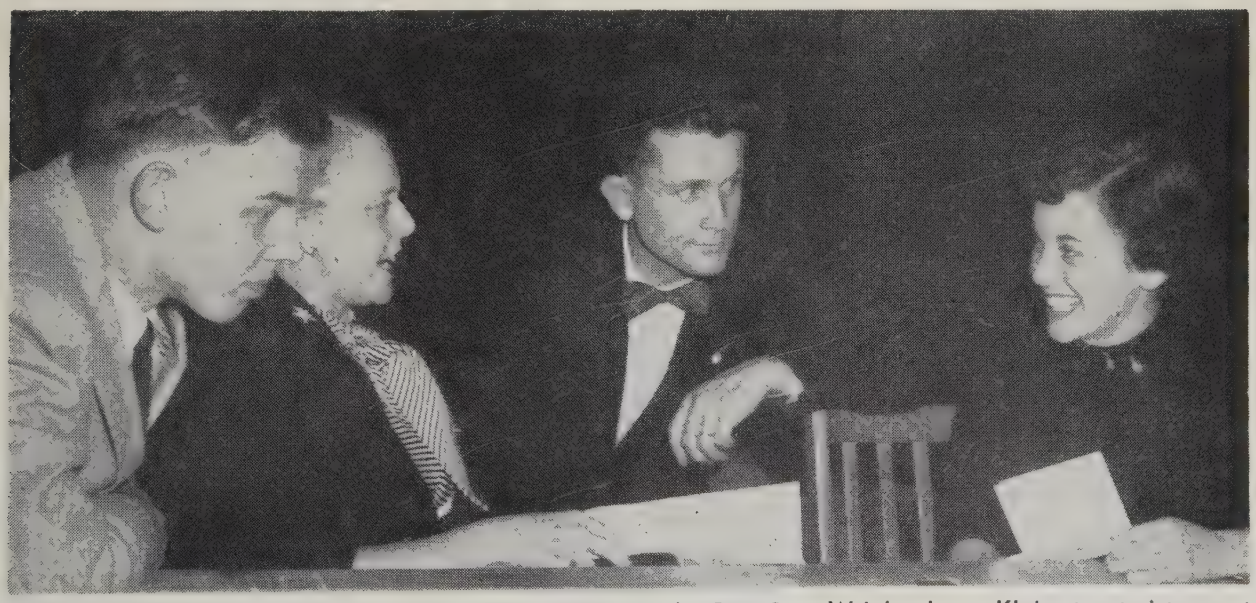
for me what the A.U.W. and Universalist women generally mean to Universalism. I can't begin to recount all their past and present invaluable contributions. Why the A.U.W. has an annual budget of over one hundred thousand dollars and capital funds upwards of two hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars, all used in behalf of Universalism — in addition to the work of the U.C.A. Indeed, the A.U.W. contributes generously to the U.C.A. Unified Appeal. More than that, besides carrying on its own programs, the A.U.W. co-operates effectively to promote many U.C.A. projects.

Undergirding the national A.U.W. are its state and local units, all co-ordinating their efforts for the larger undertakings, and each engaged in special projects for their own areas. Contemplate the mountains of pies, cakes and all kinds of food; the masses of handicraft articles and rummage goods — all flowing into countless suppers and sales to raise money for Universalism. Think of the endless variety of work that Universalist women do to keep Universalism alive at all levels, local to national. How well the A.U.W. fulfills its purpose, "to bring together in a unified group the women of the Universalist Church for the promotion of its total program."

Yes, large numbers of Universalist women are alive, and it is sobering to imagine what Universalism would be without them. Just think how Universalism would benefit if our organized men undertook comparable responsibilities! Oh, I know the excuses. Our men are too busy with business. If they give money, that's about all that can reasonably be expected. So it goes, and with notable exceptions our men let the bulk of the essential work fall upon our women. Relatively few Universalist men give vital chunks of energy and time to Universalism, nor is their effort organized sufficiently to be fully effective. Yet, in earlier and more vigorous times, the larger part of church work, as well as financial support, was the responsibility of Universalist men — almost exclusively. Today, both Universalist women and men must give of themselves and substance, work and money, if Universalism is to make much progress. Both members of the team must pull equally, if we are to get anywhere. So it seems to me, anyway.

All your workers at Headquarters join me in wishing Universalists everywhere a most joyous and significant Eastertide!

—Brainard F. Gibbons



Richard Twitchell, president, Norway group, Alice Harrison, the Rev. Sam Wright, Joyce Klain, toastmistress at the NEW ENGLAND GET-TOGETHER which brought two hundred and fifty Universalist youth to Norway, Maine, February 27 and 28 from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. The Rev. Francis Anderson, Braintree, Mass., was the theme speaker; the Rev. Sam Wright, Wellesley, Mass., the banquet speaker. Discussion leaders included: the Rev. Stanley Rawson, the Rev. Warren Lovejoy, the Rev. John Cummins, the Rev. Carl Seaburg, of Maine; the Rev. Gordon B. McKeeman, the Rev. Raymond Hopkins, Mass., and the Rev. Myles Blanchard, the Rev. Fred Russell, Jr., New Hampshire. Workshop leaders included: Frances Sprague, IRF; Norma Goodwin, Universalist Service Committee; Alice Harrison, Young Adults; King Hempel, High Schoolers; the Rev. Albert Niles, Council of Liberal Churches; Lorraine Savage, Warren Greene, Jr., Ralph Graner, Louis Charimonte, Liberal Religious Youth.

Association Of Universalist Women

16 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts

VIEWS ON U.N. AFFAIRS . . . . "Modest Success"

Byron Price

IT IS my personal view that the United Nations, as of today, is a modest success. Its weapons for peace are far from adequate, and its financial means meager for the task. Yet it has stopped several wars, has prevented others from starting, and has made really notable progress toward easing the economic and social tensions from which most wars originate.

Its greatest handicap today is the tendency of so many of its friends to speak of it as if it were some sort of noble cause or aspiration.

The United Nations is not a cause but a tangible and visible institution founded on the most realistic of considerations. I think it may be said accurately that it has now been accepted by the overwhelming majority of the people of all nations as an established part of the practical day-to-day machinery of world affairs. If anything were to happen to it, the search would have to begin at once for some other agency to take its place.

It is especially encouraging that this acceptance of the United Nations as a going and necessary concern extends conspicuously to countries which have not even been granted membership. The result is that every serious threat to peace, from whatever remote part of the globe, now comes before the bar of the U.N.

This is not to say that all of these delicate problems are solved, —far from it. But the mere act of placing them on the table creates and sustains an inescapable pressure for negotiation, private or otherwise, and so becomes a strong deterrent to rash and sudden action. In this particular field it must be recognized by sober people that even deadlock and bureaucratic delay have their value.

I think it a badly mistaken attitude for friends of the Organization to spend their time bemoaning the atmosphere of tension and mistrust in which it has been immersed. I am convinced indeed that the roughness of the first miles has been a blessing and a help. Do you know of any enduring human institution, — any stable government, —any great religion,—which had its beginning in a climate all sweetness and light?

Save for a world cataclysm, the United Nations has endured and survived in its first decade every form of trial, obstruction, misrepresentation and abuse. It has had to make its way through the dangerous waters of world economic disturbance and social turmoil, all churned to fury by a torrent of angry debate. It has even had on its hands, in Korea, a war of no mean proportion.

I consider it fortunate also that the United Nations has had its Headquarters here in New York, as detached and impersonal a city as any in the world. Here the Organization has felt the full force of the chilling blasts generated by the "hate-Europe," and even the "hate-everybody," politicians. Here it has been under the very guns, so to speak, of that curious minority of the American press which makes its living by promoting personal, national and international mistrust. That, too, has helped convince even the shrinking violets that the struggle for peace is no pink tea.

When I came to the United Nations, I was certain it never would soar to success on the wings of the dreams of zealots and professional do-gooders; that if it were to succeed, it must do so because of the realistic efforts of practical, hard-headed men and women who knew what they wanted and were willing to do what was necessary to attain it. That view has been reinforced over and over again in the past seven years.

Reprinted from the *United Nations Reporter,* February, 1954

MRS. HARRY HERSEY ASSEMBLES PERMANENT RECORD OF A.U.W. WORK IN JAPAN

Mrs. Harry Hersey, who has been active in the program for Universalist women over a long period of years, is presently engaged in a much needed service to the organization. All of the pictures, leaflets, and materials which have accumulated since Universalist women have been sponsoring programs in Japan have been sent to Mrs. Hersey at Doolittle Home for Aged, Foxboro, Mass., her present home, where she will sort, arrange in chronological order and then put into permanent scrapbooks what will prove to be both an interesting and valuable record of Universalism in Japan. The A. U. W. is grateful to Mrs. Hersey for this service for which her long personal association with the work in Japan makes her particularly fitted.

RECENT A.U.W. LITERATURE

Camp Folders for the 1954 season

Clara Barton Birthplace Booklet — five cents

Help Maintain and Administer A Program

Center Pictorial Spread from the January Bulletin

CUES — A guiding suggestion for reading, study, discussion and action

These items will be sent to individuals as well as to local A. U. W.s.

1954 YEARBOOK

The thirteenth annual *Yearbook* of the A. U. W. is now being printed. Mrs. Benjamin B. Hersey has written the *Foreword* for the present volume which in its several sections contains information about organization, programs, service projects, and a series of worship services that have been prepared by Universalist laywomen. Mrs. J. Russell Bowman, executive director, who has edited the *Yearbook* for the past two years has again served as editor for this 1954 leader's handbook.

Copies will be mailed to each State and local A. U. W. President as soon as they are released. Additional copies will be sold for fifty cents each.

Department of Education

Universalist Church of America, 16 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts

THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY

Once when we had spoken of worship, of the life-enriching experience of drinking in the beauties of nature, of music, and of "thoughts that split the night like stars," a doctor expressed confusion. He was aware of the inner excitement and enrichment we were speaking of, but he said *he* felt that way when he solved problems. Rightly so! He had discovered the life-enrichment that comes with creativity.

Worship and learning are indispensable for growth and happiness, but they are only one half of life. *Life is not only intake; it is also outgo.* One's life gathers meaning to oneself, and to others, only as one is creative. He who adds unto the sum of human joy and achievement knows that he counts, knows that he has meaning. He who doesn't add unto joy and achievement berates himself and thinks life isn't worth the living. Jesus' parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) is true! And we are judged not by how many talents we have, but what we do with what we have. The "outer darkness" is very real in terms of inner despair and lack of meaning.

Often, the act of creativity is one of intense struggle and also of excitement. This writer has known it in the preparation of sermons: after hours and sometimes days of studying and thinking, when it seemed that perhaps nothing would come, there came the exhilarating moments when the mind leaped to new insights and expression.

The climbers of Mt. Everest struggled and they won the joy of achievement.

Biographies of men and women in all walks of life tell similar stories. The glorious creations of men give testimony: every bridge, every tunnel, every new tool, every scientific discovery and achievement, every work of art, every human relation rightly established, every birth, every love, bespeak the meaning and the joy of creativity.

The meaning of creativity to life and to the very joy of life needs to sink deep into the minds and hearts of parents and educators.

To give a child some "busy work" in order to "keep him quiet or out of mischief" may do precisely that, and kill his eagerness and bury his talent. More than one life has been called a failure and known inner frustrations by such careless nipping of the bud of creativity in childhood. Many a man who doesn't seem to "amount to anything" at thirty is but the result of being cast into that very mold of non-creativity when he was a child.

Character is wrought out and created in life itself.

The kindergarten class in a church school decided to build a Martin and Judy house. Having secured help in constructing the frame, the five-year-olds themselves put on the siding and painted the exterior. They came not only on Sunday but also on Saturdays, "in their work clothes." The most persistent worker, struggling intently to finish papering the interior, said, "I never knew papering was so hard." But, at five, he learned that, he learned many skills, he learned persistence, he learned the joy of achievement. Now, years later, the Martin and Judy house still stands in the church but the growth, the skill, the persistence, the character achievements *live* in that boy.

Children naturally are inquisitive and creative. They learn how to turn the radio off and on when they can toddle to it. They dance unselfconsciously to good rhythm. And how many living room walls have been "painted" by pre-school artists, whose readiness for such activity had come!

Concerned as we are for growth and creativity, we watch for the readiness in each child, in terms of both interest and capacity. We do not force it, we strive to give it opportunity. A home-made easel and inexpensive newsprint will save the living room wall and bring joy and growth and freedom of expression to the child. By observing the child's interests and readiness, we learn from the child what the activities might be.

In the church school, as in the home, it is vitally important to pay attention to human growth and development. The Beacon Curriculum is geared to this insight. Occasionally, however, there are those who want to "teach" or "help with the craft work" who "do not want to be bothered with learning the philosophy back of our educational approach." Growth and creativity cannot be bought so easily. The possibility is that they will be endangered.

The adults with unhappy memories of church school, or filled with inhibitions not only about painting or dancing or skating or speaking their thoughts but also about having friends in to dinner, reveal damage to their personalities. Ice and skates and some wisdom are essential requirements for development of skill in skating. We are not saying that all people should have all skills. We are warning against so killing or denying growth and creative possibilities that are natural to the child as to make him an inhibited, unhappy, uncreative "adult."

See then the meaning of involving boys and girls in creative learning situations, geared to their interests and needs, involving them in discovery, in thinking, in problem-solving, in developing skills.

Some adults who read these lines may be wistful by virtue of the fact that daily routines, mastered, seem to offer little chance for fresh creativity. We know one who by years of unmeasured labor wrought out a thriving business. He was creative in it; he is still. However, he, too, has mastered the routines. Routines alone would bore him now. Without pay, he works on church and community committees and on commissions dealing with national and world problems. *There* the ceiling for creativity is unlimited.

—Edna P. Bruner

JUNIOR CHORISTERS

The Annual Junior Choristers Hour of junior choirs from Universalist Churches in southern New England will be held at the United Church of Norwood, Nahantan and Washington Streets, Norwood, Sunday afternoon, May 2, 1954 at 4:30 P.M. Parents and friends are cordially invited to attend.

News of Churches and Church People

LOS ANGELES UNIVERSALISTS WELCOME ALL RACES

Part of the morning congregation

The First Universalist Church in Los Angeles has taken a very firm stand on the question of intercultural relations. On the close of Brotherhood Month (February) the church declared openly and publicly to the community the mind of The Universalist Church of America on social principles. As printed in the *Leader* (Our Faith Demands), the subject matter was read and affirmed as the policy of the First Church. It was generally agreed that it is not enough to advocate these principles, but members must stir themselves and see to it that they are put into practice. In this light the church declared it is open for all pioneers in liberal religion and civil rights and is for all people regardless of ethnic or cultural origins. In the light of this declaration it was further stated and resolved:

"To make the firm resolution to see to it that our church is known publicly as a fellowship welcoming into full and equal membership persons of all races, cultures and origins, conditioned only by their willingness to live the liberal philosophy of Universalism and diligently work toward the end we hope to achieve . . . the brotherhood of man through service."

At a special service Sunday night, February 28, George L. Thomas, executive director of the Los Angeles County Conference on Community Relations, was the speaker. Mr. Thomas is presently one of the most outstanding leaders in the field of human relations. He served for thirteen years on the staff of Howard University, Washington, D.C. The Conference, under his leadership, has received national acclaim. Mr. Thomas received the Urban League Award for outstanding service in the field of human relations for 1951.

The First Church is planning to join as a participating member of the Conference. In order to become a member, such organization making application must be engaged in an "ongoing program" for better human relations. The Conference is composed of such organizations as American Jewish Committee, Japanese-American Citizens League, National Conference of Christians and Jews, United Steelworkers of America, C.I.O., District 38; Social Action Committee, Congregational Conference, Southern California and the Southwest, fifty-three groups in all.

PERHAM, EVANGELIST OF UNIVERSALISM

When Harold C. Perham, president of the Association of Universalist Men of Maine, said, as he gathered together the materials later published as *The Maine Book of Universalism,* "Th only way to spread Universalism is spread it," he meant, spreading it. H has proved to be such a good spread that copies of his book have been so and distributed in quantity at less tha cost through men's groups and wom en's groups in every Universalist com munity in the State of Maine. N only this, but some two hundred an seventy copies have been given to many public libraries in the state; an other hundred copies have gone in New Hampshire public libraries, an still another hundred have bee placed in public libraries in Mass chusetts. By the time spring is officia ly heralded in southern New Englan Mr. Perham expects that if he himse wants to see a copy of *The Crusad* he will be obliged to borrow one fro a neighbor.

Universalism has certainly bee spread, therefore, insofar as Mr. Pe ham's abilities are concerned; and would truly seem that this lay preach has matched the title of one of h most recent writings, *Universalis the Big Faith,* with *Universalism, th Big Deed.*

—Sheldon Christia

SAMARITAN SOCIETY MEMORIAL COMMUNION

The January meeting of the Sama itan Society of the Roxbury Churc was held at the home of Mrs. Georg E. Huntley in Cambridge. This churc has been closed for several years. small but loyal group of women ha continued to carry on meetings whe ever possible.

For several years before the passin of Dr. Huntley, a service of commun ion and memory was led by him these meetings. Since then Mrs. Hun ley has carried out this custom.

This year the service of communic was led by the Rev. Robert Miller o our Framingham church.

Following a short social hour r freshments were enjoyed. The mem bers of this group are very gratef to Mrs. Huntley for this splend meeting planned by her in memory our beloved pastor, Dr. George Huntley.

CLARA BARTON BIRTHPLACE COMMITTEE MIDWINTER MEETING PLANS FOR THE BIRTHPLACE AND CAMPS

The midwinter meeting of the Clara Barton Birthplace Committee was held at 16 Beacon Street, Boston, on February 19. Those attending were Mrs. Dana D. Goodwin, Chairman, Mrs. Philip R. Giles, Mrs. Harris Rice, Mrs. Lester W. Nerney, Mrs. Francis Anderson, Mrs. William Arter, Mrs. Dana E. Klotzle, Mrs. Daniel Lee Taylor and Miss Clara A. Adams of the Committee; Mrs. Benjamin B. Hersey, President, A. U. W., Mrs. J. Russell Bowman, Executive Director, A. U. W., Mrs. Cyrus F. Springall, Chairman of the Alumnae Group; Mrs. H. M. Marvel and Mrs. Raymond L. Clapp, of the Massachusetts Committee on Social Service of Unitarian Women, Mrs. Edward W. Sherman, Jr. and Mr. Robert B. Vail, directors of the two camps for diabetic children. Dr. Brainard F. Gibbons, General Superintendent of the U.C.A., stepped up to the fourth floor to greet members of the group, and joined in the good fellowship during the luncheon hour.

The repairs, improvements and additions to camp property which seem to appear regularly year after year, were presented by the chairmen of House and Grounds Committee for each camp. They were extensive but require little actual building. We did vote to enlarge the cook's cabin at the Joslin Camp by the addition of one room, and to extend the Baby Cabin at the Clara Barton Camp in order to more adequately house the children and meet the standards of the American Camping Association.

Flag Day observance will be on Saturday, June 12, preceded by a three-day work spell for Committee Members. We hope that many church groups and interested friends will set aside that date and plan to be present for a short program at the Birthplace and Joslin Camp.

Both camps open on June 27, the Clara Barton Camp for a ten-week summer and the Joslin Camp for a nine-week season. The camp directors reported good progress in securing staff. We do need a dietitian and graduate nurses at the Joslin Camp. Do you know of anyone who would like to spend the summer at the camp serving these diabetic boys? We cannot accommodate married couples or families.

Budgets which have now reached more than $30,000 for each camp, were considered and will be accepted at a meeting in April.

We continue to plan with enthusiasm for these camps, secure in the knowledge that the same loyal support will come from our Universalist women and friends of the girls and boys who have diabetes and look forward to their camps year after year.

—A. E. T.

MASSACHUSETTS MEN TO MEET AT MALDEN

There will be a dinner meeting April 6 at 6:30 P.M. at the First Parish Church of Malden, Massachusetts, under the auspices of the Association of Universalist Men. This will be an organizational meeting at which it is hoped Universalist laymen of Massachusetts will join forces with the national Universalist laymen's movement.

A national convention of Universalist laymen has been planned for the last week end of June, June 26 and 27, at Murray Grove, New Jersey. Detailed information on this important event will appear in subsequent numbers of *The Universalist Leader.*

HOLLYWOOD UNIVERSALISTS BUILDING "COTTAGE-IN-THE-GARDEN" PARSONAGE

The Universalist Church of Hollywood is building a "cottage-in-the-garden" of the church as a residence for the minister.

Expressing its gratitude for the support of The Universalist Church of America in founding the church and in the purchase of the church building, the Hollywood Church is assuming the total obligation for the cost of the ten-thousand-dollar residence building, and has arranged complete financing.

The convenient, modern building is located in the rear of the church, on an elevated portion of the lot, surrounded by gardens and largely enclosed by trees. Vistas to the Hollywood hills open in various directions.

The people of the church and the Sheldon Shepards are delighted with the fine addition to the church property and the prospect of having the minister and his wife in a situation ideal for convenience and effectiveness.

If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man should keep his friendships in constant repair.

—*Dr. Samuel Johnson*

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CENTRAL FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Ratified the action of the Vermont Fellowship Committee in granting to Donald Moran, an ordained Congregational clergyman, reciprocal fellowship.

—ESTHER A. RICHARDSON, *Secretary*
February 1, 1954

INSTALLATION

ROBERT S. WOLLEY was installed as minister of the Second Universalist Church of Weymouth, Massachusetts, Sunday afternoon, March 7.

The Act of Installation was led by William E. Pray, president of the Board of Trustees. The Rev. Raymond M. Scott, minister of the Third Universalist Church of Weymouth, offered the Installation Prayer. The Sermon was preached by the Rev. George J. Spencer, minister of the First Universalist Church of Worcester.

The Honorable Alan F. Sawyer, president of The Universalist Church of America, gave the Charge to the Minister and the Rev. Paul Husted, minister of All Souls Universalist Church, Worcester, gave the Charge to the Congregation.

Professor Kingsbury Badger, moderator of the congregation, brought the greetings of the congregation to the new minister and Dr. S. Burman Long, minister of the Old South Union Congregational Church, brought greetings from the community.

The Benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Robert S. Wolley.

An informal reception for Mr. and Mrs. Wolley followed the service.

LANSING UNIVERSALISTS BUY NEW CHURCH BUILDING

After using a residence as church, parsonage and all church activities since January, 1945, the Lansing, Michigan, parish is now purchasing a church building from a Baptist congregation. The Lansing Universalists will take possession the end of 1954.

The new property of the Lansing parish will consist of a brick church, an older building to be converted into a parsonage, and five lots.

ST. LAWRENCE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL FUND

Pledges and payments to the Theological School Building Fund may be sent to the treasurer of the fund, Mr. Malcolm Black, St. Lawrence Theological School Fund, 49 West 49th Street, New York 20, N.Y.

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NOTICES

ANNUAL MEETING, BETHANY UNION

The Annual Meeting of the Corporation of the Bethany Union for Young Women will be held at the home, 256 Newbury Street, Boston, Wednesday noon, April 21, 1954 at one o'clock.

Luncheon will be served. Please make reservations with Mrs. Pearl Dumas, 256 Newbury Street, Boston. Telephone, CIrcle 7-9078.

Attest
—ANNIE L. HERRICK, *Clerk*

CONNECTICUT UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION
Official Call

The 122nd Annual Session of the Connecticut Universalist Convention will be held in the First Universalist Church, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Friday and Saturday, May 14-15, 1954, beginning at 7 P.M. Friday.

The convention will be preceded by the annual meeting of the Association of Universalist Women of Connecticut which will begin at 2:00 P.M. on Friday.

—ERIC ALTON AYER, *Secretary*

CONNECTICUT A.U.W.

The Annual Convention of the Association of Universalist Women of Connecticut will be held in the Universalist Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut, May 14, 1954 at 2 P.M.

Reports will be given, officers elected, and such other business transacted as should come before said Convention.

—Shirley L. Raspe, Secretary

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSALIST WOMEN

The 69th Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Association of Universalist Women will be held at the Swampscott Universalist Church in Swampscott, Massachusetts, May 11, 1954 at 10:30 A.M. for the hearing of the annual reports, the election of officers, and for any other business that shall legally come before the Board.

—HELEN L. DANOLDS,
Recording Secretary

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(Section 520, P. L. & R.)

MASSACHUSETTS UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION

The 95th Annual Sessions of the Massachusetts Universalist Convention will be held at the Swampscott Universalist Church in Swampscott, Tuesday and Wednesday, May 11 and 12, 1954. At all sessions those entitled to vote shall be: (a) ordained clergymen in fellowship of the Convention; (b) three lay delegates from each parish in the fellowship, and such delegates shall be members of the parish which they represent and duly accredited and supported by authority from the parish clerk; (c) officers and trustees of the Convention, and members of the Committee of Fellowship.

—GEORGE J. SPENCER, *Secretary*

VERMONT AND QUEBEC UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION

Renewed Lay License of Carroll Fenwick, Jr., February 16, 1954.

—CARROLL FENWICK, JR., *Secretary*

RHODE ISLAND A.U.W.

The annual meeting of the Rhode Island Association of Universalist Women will be held on Wednesday, June 2, 1954, at the Universalist Church, Harrisville, at 1:30 P. M., for the hearing of annual reports, election of officers, and any other business of importance.

—RUTH S. GUMLEY, *Secretary*

UNIVERSALIST WOMAN'S ALLIANCE

The Universalist Woman's Alliance will meet at Bethany Union, 256 Newbury Street, Boston, Friday, April 9, at 11:00 A.M.

Dr. Minette Newman will give an illustrated talk on *My Summer Vacation.*

—GRACE M. ELWELL, *Secretary*

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